

Memorandum

To: Members of the Multi-Modal Transportation Task Force

From: Alan Wickman

Date: May 9, 2004

Subject: Pedestrian / Bicycle / Multi-Modal Transportation Coordinator and Advocate

The subject of a pedestrian / bicycle / multi-modal coordinator and advocate position within city government has been discussed during many of the meetings the Task Force has had this year. One early instance of this was the report submitted by the Great Plains Bicycling Club, which recommended a city bicycling (or bicycling-pedestrian) coordinator. Specifically, that report stated:

“It is our opinion that a city bicycle coordinator (or, more likely, a city bicycle-pedestrian coordinator) would be the best way for Lincoln city government to focus on the entire spectrum of matters important to bicyclists. We aren’t the first group to have this opinion. Several years ago, a “charrette” was held by the city to get citizen input on bicycling and pedestrian issues. Approximately 75 people with diverse interests attended. That group identified the hiring of a city bicycle-pedestrian coordinator as its #1 suggestion.”

Over the course of recent months, the Task Force has shown increased interest in this idea. Probably the biggest boost that the idea received was when SRF Consulting gave the idea of a “multi-modal coordinator” a significant role in its presentation. Then, at its March meeting, several members of the Task Force indicated interest by asking me questions on the subject. At its last meeting in April, an exercise by the Task Force to identify top priorities saw three or four members mention this position as the top priority for them and several others mentioned this position as means by which their priority could be addressed. It appears that the Task Force is coming to one of the same conclusions as the “charrette” did a few years ago.

To better respond to the questions raised in March and to put some more flesh on this idea, I consulted with the members of several organizations to which I belong. Most of the information that I received came from members of the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycling Professionals (APBP), which is the organization for bicycling / pedestrian coordinators and engineers that commonly work with the design of facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians.

As a generalization, APBP members were not enthusiastic about the idea of including responsibilities for bus transportation as part of the position. The reason for this lack of enthusiasm didn’t arise from a lack of support for bus transportation, but largely out of a concern that transit-related duties might overwhelm a single person and make them much less able to

provide adequate support for bicycling and walking. I must admit that I share these same concerns, yet I also see advantages to having a position with some degree of interest in the area of bus transportation. A family that wants to save money by going from two cars to one car by walking or bicycling will almost certainly find themselves needing bus transportation from time to time. In addition, the concerns with sprawl that are somewhat relevant to bicycling and highly relevant to walking are also relevant to being able to efficiently provide bus service.

With this background, the job description that I have drafted is something of a compromise. It attempts to involve the position in StarTran-related concerns where there is a synergy with bicycling and pedestrian interests, yet it doesn't try to take over planning, promotion or administration of bussing-related matters from StarTran. That is, while the position will be the first stop for bicycling and pedestrian-related matters, StarTran (or its successor) will continue to be responsible for planning, administrating and promoting bus service in Lincoln.

My research indicated that many cities of Lincoln's size and smaller have bicycle / pedestrian coordinators (although, notably, Omaha does not). It should be noted that cities larger than Lincoln are often part of a larger metropolitan area that includes many surrounding communities that have grown together over time. With such metropolitan areas, it is common to find such coordinators as employees of counties or metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs). To be sure, any such function for Lincoln shouldn't end at the city limits, but should also recognize development into Lancaster County. This should not be unreasonably difficult, as the Planning Department is a joint county-city department and the Comprehensive Plan is also a county-city document.

With regard to local bicycle / pedestrian coordinators in other communities, the best information that I could find was at http://www.bicyclinginfo.org/insight/faqs/bicycle_pedestrian.htm. See the attached Exhibit 2. This table shows slightly less than half of the total bicycle / pedestrian listings; the rest of the listings were with counties and MPOs. The website does not claim that the table (from February, 1999) is complete, but it should be illustrative for us. Also, please note that some of the larger cities (e.g., Chicago) have a number of employees involved in this area. It isn't always a single-employee position; in fact, I suspect that the addition of significant transit-related responsibilities may result in more than could be handled in Lincoln with a single FTE.

Exhibit 1 is a "job description" of the nature that is commonly used by personnel departments. (I don't know that it follows the same format that is used by the City of Lincoln, but it can surely be adapted.) It gives a general description of the position and provides an extensive list of illustrative duties.

Please note that this job description should only be viewed as a draft. I believe that it does some things better than others. One thing that I believe that it does very well is to illustrate the duties of a bicycle / pedestrian coordinator. The reason for this is that I am very familiar with this area, plus I obtained descriptions from several other communities from which to plagiarize. Probably the weakest part of the description is its coordination with StarTran. The reason for this *isn't* my skepticism about placing duties of this nature with the position; rather, I found it difficult to say that this position should be responsible for various things relating to StarTran when it appeared

to me that such responsibilities would be more appropriately vested with StarTran itself. I was also handicapped by the fact that the other descriptions available to me didn't contemplate these duties, so I had to draft those from scratch.

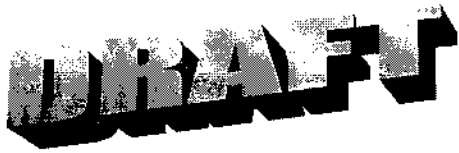
There are two other areas that may require some work before this could be used as a final product. First, this will need to be put in the same format that is used for other positions within the Planning Department (which is where I envision this position being located). During this process, which I presume will require some assistance from someone within the Planning Department (Kent Morgan?), various references will probably need to be revised to be more precise in terms of practices within the Planning Department. The second area that will probably require some work is to do a better job of identifying the coordination needed with Parks & Recreation; specifically, the position of Natural Resources Manager held by Terry Genrich. Terry's duties include handling of the trails system, which will remain an important component of Lincoln's support of pedestrian and bicycling interests.

To summarize:

- The attached exhibits show a draft job description and a listing of communities with bicycling / pedestrian coordinators. This responds to questions asked at the March meeting and should be of value to the Task Force as it considers this position in the future.
- I believe that the weakest parts of the attached job description are its references to support for StarTran. In addition to getting additional input with regard to this, I believe that it would be appropriate for the Task Force to consider how much that it wants this position to have responsibilities for StarTran activity.
- There are other aspects of this draft that will undoubtedly benefit from the input of others. In addition to providing a copy of this to Kent Morgan, I have also copied Larry Worth (StarTran) and Terry Genrich (Parks & Recreation).

In conclusion, I hope that this does a better job of answering the questions that were asked in March, and I hope that the Task Force finds it useful. I will be happy to work with any efforts to refine the draft of the job description that is attached.

cc: Larry Worth, StarTran
Terry Genrich, Parks & Recreation



**Pedestrian / Bicycle / Multi-Modal Transportation Coordinator and Advocate
Position Description**

The position is within and reports to the Director of the Planning Department.

General statement of duties:

This position will be responsible for providing strategic planning and direction, technical expertise, and project management for the development and implementation of bicycling and pedestrian programs throughout the City. With the objective of minimizing or eliminating such barriers, and identifying opportunities for better pedestrian / bicycle / bus service, this position will review plans for street and subdivision development or major rebuilding to identify barriers to pedestrian use, bicycling activities and the providing of bus service by StarTran.

The following is an illustrative list of tasks performed by this position:

Develop and implement long and short term goals for bicycle and pedestrian projects and programs.

Review plans for street and subdivision development or major rebuilding to identify barriers to pedestrian use, bicycling activities and the providing of bus service by StarTran. Communicate with property owners and developers to recognize and respect bicycle and pedestrian needs in street development and construction projects.

Prepare and provide educational information on bicycle and pedestrian safety, including presentations to elected officials, community groups, and schools. Produce audio, video, and print public service announcements and press releases. Assist the schools in implementation of programs and instruction designed to promote walking and bicycling and to educate students with regard to pedestrian and bicycling safety.

Serve as the initial point of contact for citizen requests, input, ideas, complaints, and questions on bicycle and pedestrian planning, trails, sidewalk requests and other related facilities.

Develop and implement public involvement programs for input on bicycling and pedestrian matters and on major transportation projects.

Work with both public and private sectors to obtain funding and grants for proposed pedestrian and bicycling projects and programs. Coordinate this activity with the Parks & Recreation Department when such projects relate to trails; coordinate this activity with StarTran when such projects relate to bus transportation; coordinate this activity with Public Works when such projects relate to construction or maintenance of streets and sidewalks, and coordinate this activity with the Health Department when such projects relate to public health.

With assistance from the Parks & Recreation Department with regard to trails, this person will be the primary city support person for the Pedestrian-Bicycle Advisory Committee.

Collect and/or analyze data pertinent to pedestrian and bicycle issues, such as accident data, bicycle parking availability, traffic counts, pedestrian, and bicycle counts.

Act as a liaison between the city and the University of Nebraska and other colleges and universities in Lincoln to develop programs and material to promote walking and bicycling as a means of transportation. Coordinate such efforts with StarTran to better serve these institutions.

Plan and coordinate special projects and activities.

Work with the Lincoln Police Department to encourage active enforcement of laws and regulations relating to bicycle and pedestrian safety.

Represent the City in attending and participating in related meetings with local, state, and federal regulatory agencies and professional groups, including commissions and boards.

Stay abreast of new regulations, trends, and innovations related to pedestrian interests, bicycling and bus transportation.

Along with other members of the Planning Department, meet regularly with the Public Works Department with regard to the planning of new roads and roads that are being rebuilt or redesigned.

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This table can be found at http://www.bicyclinginfo.org/insight/faqs/bicycle_pedestrian.htm. Note that this amounts to slightly less than half of the total bicycle / pedestrian listings. The rest of the listings were with counties and MPOs. The website does not claim that the table (from February, 1999) is complete, but it should be illustrative for us. Also, note that larger cities (e.g., Chicago) tend to have more than one employee involved in this area.

Cities	Population of City
Albuquerque	420,000
Alexandria	117,000
Ann Arbor	109,000
Asheville	65,000
Auburn	40,000
Austin	587,000
Berkeley	108,000
Billings	92,000
Binghamton, NY	47,000
Boca Raton	72,000
Boulder	91,000
Cambridge	92,000
Chandler	169,000
Charlotte	520,000
Chicago	2,799,000
Cincinnati	330,000
Columbus, OH	671,000
Corvallis	50,000
Dallas	1,076,000
Davis	56,000
Denver	499,000
District of Columbia	519,000
Durham	179,000
Eugene	130,000
Fayetteville	58,000
Ft. Collins	113,000
Gainesville	92,000
Gresham	87,000
Honolulu	395,000
Houston	1,845,000
Jackson, WY	8,647
Key West	27,000

Lafayette, CA	23,975
Las Vegas	418,000
Lawrence, KS	78,000
Los Angeles	3,633,000
Madison	210,000
Mesa	368,000
Minneapolis	353,000
Missoula	58,000
Modesto	188,000
New York	7,428,000
Oakland	365,000
Olympia	42,000
Palo Alto	58,000
Philadelphia	1,417,000
Phoenix	1,211,000
Pittsburgh	336,000
Portland	503,000
Rockville, MD	47,388
Sacramento	406,000
Salinas, CA	123,000
San Diego	1,238,000
San Francisco	746,000
San Jose	867,000
Santa Barbara	86,000
Santa Cruz	53,000
Seattle	537,000
Shoreview, MN	26,500
St. Paul	256,000
Tallahassee/Leon County	135,000
Tempe	167,000
Tucson	466,000
Vancouver, WA	118,000